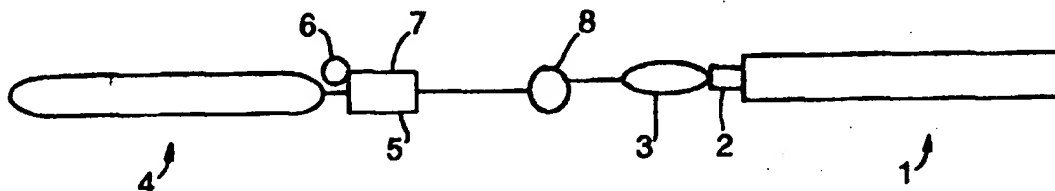


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INTERNATIONAL APPLICATION PUBLISHED UNDER THE PATENT COOPERATION TREATY (PCT)

(51) International Patent Classification ⁶ : C12N 15/12, 15/54, 15/62, 15/63, 15/85, 5/10, C07K 14/245, 14/435, 14/47, 14/82, C12Q 1/68 // C12N 15/86, A61K 48/00		A1	(11) International Publication Number: WO 97/12970
			(43) International Publication Date: 10 April 1997 (10.04.97)
(21) International Application Number: PCT/GB96/02416		(81) Designated States: AL, AM, AT, AU, AZ, BA, BB, BG, BR, BY, CA, CH, CN, CU, CZ, DE, DK, EE, ES, FI, GB, GE, HU, IL, IS, JP, KE, KG, KP, KR, KZ, LC, LK, LR, LS, LT, LU, LV, MD, MG, MK, MN, MW, MX, NO, NZ, PL, PT, RO, RU, SD, SE, SG, SI, SK, TJ, TM, TR, TT, UA, UG, US, UZ, VN, ARIPO patent (KE, LS, MW, SD, SZ, UG), Eurasian patent (AM, AZ, BY, KG, KZ, MD, RU, TJ, TM), European patent (AT, BE, CH, DE, DK, ES, FI, FR, GB, GR, IE, IT, LU, MC, NL, PT, SE), OAPI patent (BF, BJ, CF, CG, CI, CM, GA, GN, ML, MR, NE, SN, TD, TG).	
(22) International Filing Date: 2 October 1996 (02.10.96)			
(30) Priority Data: 9520079.6 2 October 1995 (02.10.95) GB 9616685.5 8 August 1996 (08.08.96) GB			
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(54) Title: ANTITUMOUR VECTOR CONSTRUCTS AND METHODS



(57) Abstract

Compositions for targetting expression of a gene such as an antitumor gene may contain a first nucleic acid construct in which expression of a first gene (1) is controlled by a first promoter (2, 3) whose function is suppressed in non-tumour cells, and a second nucleic acid construct in which expression of a second gene (4) for down-regulating the first gene in non-tumour cells is controlled by a second promoter (5, 6) that is up-regulated in non-tumour cells. The second promoter may be regulated by means of p53 binding, targetting expression of the first gene to cells in which p53 down-regulation of expression is disrupted, e.g. cells in which p53 is mutated. The first promoter may be one which is up-regulated in tumour cells, for example the Hsp70 promoter which is up-regulated in mutant p53 tumour cells. A suitable antitumour agent is thymidine kinase, demonstrated using such compositions to provide cell killing action specific for tumour cells as opposed to non-tumour cells.